

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TUNIS 04220 131048Z
ACTION NEA-11

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FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1448

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: USTSJC TS
SUBJ: US-TUNISIAN JOINT COMMISSION: NEXT MEETING

1. TUNISIAN AMBASSADOR TO WASHINGTON ALI HEDDA, HERE ON CONSULTATIONS, CAME IN FOR A GENERAL CHAT, BUT PUSHED HARD HIS VIEW THAT URGENT STEPS SHOULD BE TAKEN TO RE-ORGANIZE ANOTHER MEETING OF THE US-TUNISIAN JOINT COMMISSION BEFORE OCTOBER, LEST TWO YEARS PASS SINCE OUR LAST ONE. I TOLD HIM THAT I HAD SUGGESTED THE SAME THOUGHT EARLIER THIS YEAR TO WASHINGTON BUT POINTED OUT THAT WE HAD LEFT THE BALL IN THE GOT'S COURT FOR SUGGESTED DATES. I ADDED THAT OUR SIDE REALLY NEEDED ABOUT TWO MONTHS TO PREPARE OUR POSITIONS AND THAT WE WOULD BE IN RAMADHAN TWO MONTHS FROM NOW.

2. HE SAID HE REALIZED THE PROBLEM OF ROUNDING UP HIGH-LEVEL PARTICIPANTS IN THE SUMMER BUT PROPOSED THE FOLLOWING FORMULA TO TES OUT FIRST ON GOT:

-- LAST WEEK OF JULY: A MEETING OF THE JOINT COMMISSION
"AT TECHNICAL LEVEL" IN TUNIS.

-- IN THE FALL: A BRIEF TOP-LEVEL MEETING IN WASHINGTON DURING THE PROSPECTIVE VISIT OF PRIME MINISTER NOUIRA AT WHICH FINAL AGREEMENTS COULD BE REACHED AND NEW AGREE-
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MENTS, IF ANY, SIGNED.

3. HEDDA SAID HE WOULD DISCUSS THIS FORMULA THIS WEEK WITH MINPLAN AND PRIME MINISTER AND TALK TO ME AGAIN ABOUT THEIR REACTIONS BEFORE RETURNING TO WASHINGTON NEXT WEEK.

4. ACTION REQUESTED: COMMENTS ON THE HEDDA PROPOSAL FOR

A TWO-STAGE JOINT COMMISSION MEETING THIS YEAR FROM OUR
WASHINGTON BACKSTOPPERS ARE SOLICITED. IF RECEIVED BEFORE
END OF THE WEEK THEY WOULD BE ESPECIALLY USEFUL.
MULCAHY

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